

mentioned, but provide very meaningful tax relief. Under our bill, income for taxation of the Social Security check would be reduced from 85 to 50 percent to households earning up to \$100,000 and individuals earning up to \$80,000. That means someone on Social Security has their Social Security check and an additional \$80,000 for an individual, \$100,000 for a couple.

One-third of all people on Social Security today live on their Social Security check. Two-thirds have the Social Security check for most of their income. We are talking about the most affluent 5 percent, the only group that would be excluded from the tax cut offered by the minority.

Now, some might say, why do you not give it to everybody? After all, the most affluent need the break too. We do not think they need the break as badly as we need to apply these revenues in other areas, and we save by our approach, by capping it at the \$100,000 per household, we save \$40 billion over a 10-year period of time. Just think what you can do to enhance prescription drugs for seniors with \$40 billion.

So it is a matter of who needs these resources first, the very most affluent households, as advanced by the majority, or those other households that cannot afford their prescription drug medicine that might benefit from reallocation of those dollars in that area.

So basically that is the choice between the two approaches. The majority approach offers tax relief; the minority approach offers tax relief. The majority approach fails to protect the Medicare Trust Fund; the minority approach protects the Medicare Trust Fund. The majority passes on a significant tax break to the most affluent households in this country; the minority substitute advances meaningful tax relief for 95 percent of the Social Security recipients in this country, leaving only those households earning \$100,000 or more in outside income to continue to have 85 percent of their Social Security income considered for taxation.

All in all, as you look at the issue, I think you will have to conclude that there are two ways to approach tax relief in this area, and the Democrat approach, with its protection for the trust fund, with its granting of tax relief to all but the most affluent 5 percent in this country, with the preservation of the \$40 billion saved thereby for application on critical priorities like Medicare prescription drug coverage, the Democrat substitute is the better way to go.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, I want to close on behalf of the Republican Party today and thank my colleagues for their vigorous debate on behalf of an issue that is important to seniors in our country.

I am always amazed to see that the party that put the tax on people, on senior citizens of this country, is now trying to defend that tax and say, well, they have to make sure that they have

this money so that we do not go into deficit spending.

The fact of the matter is, Mr. Speaker, there will be two bills that will be voted on today: one which is the substitute which was described by the gentleman from North Dakota (Mr. POMEROY), which is an opportunity to have every single Member of this House of Representatives vote today.

Then there will be a second bill, the real bill, the one that does the right thing, the one that is the very same or similar that was just passed in the Senate, where Senator FEINSTEIN, Senator CONRAD, Senator DORGAN, and Senator JOHNSON all voted this last week on the Republican plan, a plan that does the real thing, the plan that says that the average tax of \$1,180 that is paid this year, that is going to grow to \$1,359 for the average senior citizen in the year 2010, is simply wrong.

We believe it is wrong for people to be taxed at an 85 percent rate for income above \$34,000 for senior citizens and \$44,000 for couples. We believe that the real bill that will be on the floor today that will pass will be the Republican plan, which is the one that says we do not believe that the burden should be placed on the senior citizens of our country.

We do not believe, as Republicans, that Social Security should be taxed at all. Of course we are different. The difference between the Republican Party and the Democrat Party can once again be seen today. One side is for the taxing of senior citizens, the other is we want to do away with taxes on Social Security.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud of the Republican Party. I am proud of the differences we offer for senior citizens.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote for this fair rule. I urge my colleagues to weigh and consider the two bills before us, and I urge support of the Republican bill.

Mr. FOLEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the rule on H.R. 4865, the Social Security Benefits Tax Relief Act. This bill repeals the unfair and punitive tax increase on America's Social Security recipients. This tax increase was included in the Clinton/Gore 1993 Budget Bill, a bill I am happy to say did not receive a single Republican vote in either the House or Senate.

The federal government this year is expected to run a \$233 billion surplus. There is absolutely no reason to continue punishing our senior citizens by confiscating their hard earned Social Security benefits.

The 1993 tax increase raised the portion of Social Security benefits subject to income tax from 50 percent to 85 percent for millions of American retirees.

Taxing any portion of Social Security benefits is unfair and immoral. Taxpayers not only pay Social Security taxes from their wages but also are obligated to count as income for tax purposes the wages they never see that have been paid into Social Security. In other words, their wages earned over lifetime and paid into Social Security are taxed twice. This is unconscionable.

The other side is going to tell you that this proposal will destroy the Medicare Hospital In-

surance Trust Fund. Nothing could be further from the truth. It is true that these taxes are directed to the Medicare Part A Trust Fund. However, this bill will transfer funds from the general fund to the trust fund to make up for any shortfall from repealing this onerous tax.

Mr. Speaker, let's repeal this unfair tax. It never should have been instituted and its demise is long overdue.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time, and I move the previous question on the resolution.

The previous question was ordered.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BARRETT of Nebraska). The Chair advises that Members should avoid personal references to Members of the Senate, other than as sponsors of measures.

The question is on the resolution.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. MOAKLEY. Mr. Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a quorum is not present and make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8, rule XX, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

The point of no quorum is considered withdrawn.

1300

WAIVING POINTS OF ORDER AGAINST CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 4516, LEGISLATIVE BRANCH APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2001

Mr. LINDER. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 565 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 565

Resolved, That upon adoption of this resolution it shall be in order to consider the conference report to accompany the bill (H.R. 4516) making appropriations for the Legislative Branch for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2001, and for other purposes. All points of order against the conference report and against its consideration are waived. The conference report shall be considered as read.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BARRETT of Nebraska). The gentleman from Georgia (Mr. LINDER) is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. LINDER. Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. FROST), pending which I yield myself such time as I may consume. During consideration of this resolution, all time yielded is for the purpose of debate only.

Mr. Speaker, H. Res. 565 is a rule providing for consideration of H.R. 4516, the conference report for the Legislative Branch Appropriations bill for fiscal year 2001. The rule waives all points

of order against the conference report and its consideration and provides that the conference report shall be considered as read.

House rules provide 1 hour of general debate divided equally between the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on Appropriations and one motion to recommit, with or without instructions, as is the right of the minority members of the House.

There are many important provisions of this legislation and I want to briefly discuss the conference report that this rule makes in order. Regarding the Legislative Branch Appropriations, this bill continues our efforts since the 104th Congress to downsize the legislative branch of government. This bill before us today offers additional proof of our commitment to fiscal responsibility and this bill has overwhelming support. In fact, the Legislative Branch Appropriations bill passed the House only 1 month ago on June 22 by a 373 to 50 vote.

Mr. Speaker, this conference report also includes funding for the Department of Treasury and general government appropriations. These appropriations fund many national priorities such as enhancing law enforcement, school violence prevention, combatting international child pornography trafficking, and enforcement of our existing gun laws.

The Treasury Postal Appropriations bill passed the House last week, and I commend the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. KOLBE) for his hard work on this bill.

I want to comment on the inclusion in this conference report of the repeal of the telecommunications tax of 1898. I am very pleased that this conference report eliminates the telecommunications tax, a tax that is currently limiting the opportunities of lower- and middle-income Americans to have affordable access to the information superhighway.

This is just one more tax that makes it cost prohibitive for lower-income Americans to go online, and I support the inclusion of this provision in this conference report.

The foolish and shortsighted tax policies of the 101st Congress should be stopped as soon as possible. That was the Congress that made that tax permanent that was originally imposed in 1898.

This conference report gives us the opportunity to advance this common sense telecom tax repeal. There is no reason to delay sending this to the President as soon as possible.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to close by noting that only 60 days ago, on March 25, this House passed the repeal of the telecommunications tax by a vote of 420 to 2. This rule was favorably reported by the Committee on Rules. I urge my colleagues to support the rule today on the floor so we may proceed with the general debate in consideration of this very important conference report.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. FROST. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise not only in opposition to this rule but to the heavy-handed manner in which the Republican leadership has chosen to conduct business in the hours before we adjourn for the August summer recess.

Mr. Speaker, I must protest in the strongest possible terms the fact that the Republican leadership has, in the dark hours of night, cobbled together what they are calling a conference report on legislative branch appropriations. The majority must be snickering behind their hands, Mr. Speaker, because this so-called conference report is constructed of one bill which has actually passed both houses, the Legislative Branch Appropriations, as well as one that has only seen action on this side of the Capitol, Treasury Postal Appropriations.

But there is something else. This appropriations conference report also contains a tax bill, the repeal of the telephone tax passed earlier by the House. This action was taken without any consultation with Democratic Members of the Committee on Appropriations, or with the Democratic leadership. Accordingly, no Democratic member of the Legislative Branch Conference Committee signed this report.

Mr. Speaker, while I have a photocopy of the conference report, I am at a loss to try to explain to my colleagues exactly what is in it. The report was assembled literally in the dark of night, sometime between 11:00 p.m. last night and 7:01 a.m. this morning, when it was filed. Democrats were led to believe last night this conference agreement was going to contain a minimum wage increase, as well as several tax provisions.

I have been assured that this document does not now contain the minimum wage but since the Committee on Rules did not provide us a single sheet of explanatory materials when we met at 8:30 a.m. this morning, I can only vouch for that by having quickly skimmed through this document.

In addition, Mr. Speaker, in order to accommodate the rush to get out of town, the Republican leadership kept the Committee on Rules waiting until 11:00 p.m. last night and the House in session until 11:30 p.m. Once it was determined that more work was needed to be done on this so-called conference report, the Committee on Rules was sent home but the House was not adjourned. It was instead recessed until 7:00 a.m. this morning so that the Committee on Rules could meet and file a rule this morning on the same legislative day and, thus, avoid the necessity of sending a martial law rule to the floor this morning.

Mr. Speaker, I must protest what I consider to be a disrespectful abuse of this institution and its Members, as well as the many employees who are required to hurry up and wait while the

Republican leadership tries to figure out exactly how to run this body.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, the rush to consider this matter is all the more peculiar since it seems that the Senate has absolutely no intention of considering this conference report until after the recess in September. This process makes no sense, Mr. Speaker, but it is a perfect example of the disregard the Republican leadership has demonstrated time and again for this institution, its practices, and precedents and the Members who serve here.

I urge every Member of the House to oppose this rule if for no other reason than to stand up for regular order.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LINDER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. KOLBE), the chairman of the Subcommittee on Treasury, Postal Service, and General Government.

Mr. KOLBE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. LINDER) for yielding me this time.

Mr. Speaker, I listened with interest to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. FROST) and the comments he made about the procedures that were followed in bringing this conference report to the floor of the House. I will not comment on some of those procedures because they are, as we say, above my pay grade. They were decisions made beyond me, but I do want to comment about that part for which I have some knowledge and some responsibility, and that is the part in here, the very large part in here, that deals with the Treasury, Postal and General Government Appropriation.

I think from a procedural standpoint, we need to understand a couple of things. First of all, I can remember on the floor of this House last year listening to the laments of the minority, our friends across the aisle, as they complained that we were not acting on appropriation bills in a timely fashion. Now, of course, today, if we pass the D.C. appropriations bill we will have passed all of the appropriations bills before the August recess. I believe that is an unprecedented number in modern times. So we are hearing the complaint today with this conference report that we are really rushing it, we are moving it too fast; and we have heard that there was not sufficient consultation with the minority about this.

I regret very much that there was not more minority participation in the informal conference which took place on this bill, but I think it is very important that my colleagues understand that the minority was given full opportunity to participate, both the minority in the House of Representatives and in the Senate, and it was their decision, their choice, not to have staff members participate in the discussion of the provisions that were different between the House and the Senate bills as we tried to iron those out.

Now, the process that we followed was one that is followed, as far as I

know, as long as I have been here in every appropriations conference. That is that staff people from the two sides, the Senate and the House, get together and try and iron out the major differences. We followed that procedure. Where there were major differences that could not be handled by staff, I worked with my counterpart over in the Senate. Again, because a decision was made by the minority not to participate in those meetings, we did it on an informal basis.

Was there a formal conference committee held? No. I cannot say how many times that I served on conference committees when I was in the minority of appropriations where the conference committee never met at all. So I do not think this process has been any different.

I do regret very much that the minority chose not to participate in this process. They chose not to be involved in it. Nonetheless, the charge that was given to me was to make sure that we had a bill that was signable and passable, passable in the House and the Senate, signable by the President of the United States.

I think when we get into a discussion of the conference report itself, we will have an opportunity to see that many of the concerns that were expressed on this floor during debate on the Treasury Postal bill, by the Members from the other side of the aisle, were addressed. Many, if not all, of the concerns that were expressed by the administration through their statement of administration policy, called the SAP, in the letter that was sent both to the House and to the Senate appropriators, virtually all of those issues were addressed.

We have what I believe is a bill that is definitely a very good bill. It deals with the problems that confront the Internal Revenue Service, the Customs Service. We will have an opportunity to discuss those in greater detail as we go forward here, but I think that it is very clear to say that an opportunity was given for both sides to participate in this process. I do hope, before we get to a vote on the conference report, that there will be a much better understanding by all Members about the process, not only about the process but about the content of what is in this bill.

I think when they do understand it, there will be a great deal of acceptance.

Mr. FROST. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 1 minute.

Mr. Speaker, I am unclear about what the gentleman just said. Is the gentleman suggesting that the Republican leadership in the Senate is not competent to bring a bill to the floor for a vote because this is the crux of the argument? The Treasury Postal bill was never voted on in the Senate on the floor. What they did was to short-circuit the normal legislative process, reach out from the conference committee on another bill and pick up

a bill that had never been passed on the floor of the Senate.

So I do not quite understand what the gentleman was saying. Was he saying that his own leadership on the other side of the Capitol was not capable of bringing a bill to a vote on the floor of the Senate? I am curious as to why they chose to pick this bill up and put it into conference when it had never been voted on by the full Senate.

Mr. KOLBE. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. FROST. I yield to the gentleman from Arizona.

Mr. KOLBE. The answer is that over in the Senate, for reasons of their own, there was a dispute over some of the confirmations, as I understand it, confirmations of judgeships, and for that reason there was a hold placed on any of the appropriation bills after the legislative bill. So that became the only vehicle really that was available to us.

Mr. LINDER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. KOLBE), for him to respond.

Mr. KOLBE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. LINDER) for yielding the additional time so I can respond.

Mr. Speaker, so the decision was made over in the Senate that in order to try to expedite this process and to get not only the legislative bill but the Treasury Postal bill and at least this one tax bill that had passed by such a very large margin done before the August recess, that they would put those together and that is the reason, very simply, why it was put on this bill.

There was a debate that preceded yesterday on the Treasury bill. I am not sure how far they got yesterday before the end of the day, but they have had debate on the bill on the floor of the United States Senate.

Mr. FROST. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 1 additional minute.

Mr. Speaker, let me see if I understand this. If the Senate is incapable of voting on a bill, for whatever reason, if they are incapable of taking a bill to final passage, then that is the basis for rolling that bill into a conference. If I understand what the gentleman is saying, he is saying, well, they just cannot get anything done over there in the Senate. They have some problems so we have to help them by picking up a bill that they never voted on and just rolling it into the conference on another bill. That seems a very peculiar procedure, particularly since we are going to come back after the Republican and the Democratic conventions. It is not like this is the last day of the session. We will certainly be here for the full month of September so it seems like a very peculiar and unusual procedure.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair would again remind Members to avoid improper references to the Senate, including characterizations of their actions.

Mr. FROST. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MOAKLEY).

Mr. MOAKLEY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Texas (Mr. FROST), the chairman of the Democratic Caucus, for yielding me the time.

1315

Mr. Speaker, this rule is coming to the floor under the most unbelievable circumstances. Last night when there was a baseball game going on between the Republicans and Democrats, there was another game going on upstairs, only this game had no referees and no umpires. After everyone else had gone home, the Committee on Rules waited around until 11 p.m. for the Republican leadership to decide our fate. Late last night, we finally get word that we are not going to meet, but the House would stay in session so that we could come back early this morning, file three rules, and immediately recess to begin another legislative day.

The Republican leadership decided to take two appropriations bills, Legislative Branch and Treasury Postal, and work on them until 7 a.m. this morning, and then, 1½ hours later, send them to the Committee on Rules. A couple of hours after that, here they are on the floor of the House. Meanwhile, Mr. Speaker, really, barely anyone has the foggiest idea what is in this bill. Yet, Mr. Speaker, we are supposed to vote on it.

This convoluted process is just a part of a larger pattern of disrespect, not only for the Committee on Rules, but for the entire membership at large. Mr. Speaker, it is totally uncalled for. The Senate has already announced that they will not take this up until mid-September. Why the rush? I suspect, Mr. Speaker, the lightning speed with which this bill is arriving on the House floor has something to do with the contents.

Once upon a time, Mr. Speaker, there were two noble suggestions on the House floor: one, to lift the American embargo on food and medicine to Cuba and the other one would lift the restrictions preventing American citizens from traveling to Cuba. A majority of the House recognized the wisdom in lifting the outdated prohibition on sending either American food or American medicine to our neighbors in Cuba. The House then voted 301 to 116 to pass the Moran amendment to lift the food and medicine embargo and the Senate passed a similar amendment by Senator DORGAN.

A majority of the House recognized that this embargo that was started some 40 years ago when things were a lot different than they are today. Communism was a real threat; Cuba was a real threat. But, Mr. Speaker, that policy has not worked for 40 years, and the American people have asked us to change.

Mr. Speaker, there are sick people in Cuba who could use our help. They live 90 miles from the world's best doctors,

hospitals, and researchers. We should be sharing our discoveries, because it is the right thing to do; and we should not be denying them because we feel we abhor the Fidel Castro-type of government.

The House also passed the Sanford amendment to allow Americans to travel to Cuba by a vote of 232 to 186. It is one of the most fundamental rights we have as Americans, the right to travel freely, and that also is being denied.

But despite those majority votes, the Republican leadership removed these limitation amendments in the wee hours of this morning and hope we would be none the wiser.

So in order to change the will of the majority of the House, we are considering this rule and these bills under a skewed, undemocratic process. So I urge my colleagues to oppose the rule. The Cuban people and the American farmers deserve better.

Mr. LINDER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I would point out that there is a compromise in the works on the Cuban language, language that I joined the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MOAKLEY) in supporting and that will, I presume, be on the agricultural bill. He can rest assured that this will be taken care of on the floor.

Mr. MOAKLEY. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. LINDER. I yield to the gentleman from Massachusetts.

Mr. MOAKLEY. Mr. Speaker, as my colleagues may recall, this language came through on the agriculture bill, but then they decided to take it off and put it on the Treasury bill, and they were sure it would be there. Now they are going to put it back on the agricultural bill.

Mr. LINDER. Mr. Speaker, reclaiming my time, I think I made my point, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. FROST. Mr. Speaker, I yield 6 minutes to the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. OBEY), the ranking member of the Committee on Appropriations.

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me this time.

Before I begin my remarks, I would like to ask one question in case anybody can answer this. I would like to ask the majority if they can tell me by how many dollars do the two bills in this conference report exceed the budget resolution and exceed the allocation provided to each of the subcommittees under the Budget Act? Is there no one who can answer that question?

Mr. LINDER. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. OBEY. I yield to the gentleman from Georgia.

Mr. LINDER. Mr. Speaker, not being on the Committee on Appropriations, I am certain that, when that bill gets to the floor and into debate, they can explain that to the gentleman.

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Speaker, reclaiming my time, I find it interesting that a party which professes to be so con-

cerned with budget stringency will ask us to bring a bill to the floor before we even know by how much it exceeds the budget under which we are supposed to operate.

My understanding is that the Legislative Subcommittee portion of this conference report exceeds the budget by \$47 million, and that the Treasury-Post Office bill exceeds the allocation by \$1.2 billion; and then there is also an additional \$6 billion question mark because of the shifting of pay dates for SSI and for veterans' checks, which I think makes a real hash of any claim that there is any kind of budget discipline at all left around here.

Secondly, I would simply like to observe, as my friend, Archie the Cockroach, has often observed, that this bill looks like an accident that started out to happen to somebody else. The legislative appropriations bill was moving along, following the normal process. The normal process is that the House passes an appropriation bill and then the Senate passes it, and then we have a conference committee which meets and resolves the differences, and then we pass the conference report and send it on to the President for his signature. That is what has happened, commendably, for one portion of this conference report.

However, then the conference report ran into a train wreck, because being attached to it is a conference report on another appropriation bill, the Treasury-Post Office bill, and the quaint thing about that is that the Senate has never even considered that bill. So now we are being asked to consider a bill which represents a compromise between the House and the Senate on Treasury-Post Office, and yet the Senate has never had an opportunity to formulate a position on the bill.

The reason the minority did not participate in the sham meeting that took place in the dead of night last night is because on both sides of the Capitol, we feel this process is so profoundly illegitimate that we wanted nothing to do with it.

The fact is that what my Republican colleagues have done does have practical results. What they have done, for instance, is to add a totally non-germane tax provision which, if we had tried to bring it to the floor, would have been laughed out of the place. Secondly, you have had some anonymous source in the majority party leadership unilaterally and arrogantly reverse a decision made on the floor of this House by the full membership of this House when it comes to the embargo issue.

Now, that does not surprise me, because a year ago I was promised personally by two members of the Republican leadership, and they know who they are, I was promised personally that they would take no action to block the reform of dairy milk marketing orders on an appropriation bill. The leadership then went back on that promise in the last week of the session,

which led to a filibuster in both Houses on that issue; and now, farmers again are going to wake up to discover that a victory which they thought they had won on the House floor is being snatched away from them in the dead of night by anonymous Republican leaders who have decided that they do not care what the majority decided on this House floor with respect to the embargo issue. They are going to throw it in the ash can because it does not either meet their political objectives or their ideological objectives or their substantive objectives. That process too is illegitimate, and that is why they did not find the minority party participating in that.

Mr. Speaker, I would also point out that we have a strange shell game going on, because in the budget last year this Congress voted to move the pay dates for SSI and for veterans back one day, to move it into the next fiscal year. Then, in the supplemental which the majority passed a while back this year, they reversed that decision; and now they are reversing their reversal, and that is why I asked the question; Does not that mean that, in fact, this bill is almost \$7 billion over the allocations assigned to it under the Budget Act? I think the answer is yes; but so far, we have not gotten a clear answer on it.

Then we have one more quaint provision which says that the GSA is ordered to build a road in New Mexico. GSA, to my knowledge, has never built a road in the history of their operation. I find it very interesting that that kind of "urgent emergency" appropriation is being provided in this bill.

So this is the way Daffy Duck would do business on a bad day. It is a joke, and it ought to be defeated.

Mr. LINDER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. KOLBE) for the purpose of a response.

Mr. KOLBE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding. I do want to respond to the gentleman from Wisconsin. He asked a question, as I recall a rhetorical question since he answered himself, about the amount that this was over the allocation. I can only respond, of course, for the Treasury bill. He is correct, it is about \$1.2 billion over the allocation.

My question to him in return would be, is the gentleman saying that the money is too much, that we should not have these funds in there? Because earlier on the floor, just to let me finish my comment, earlier on the floor when we were debating the Treasury-Postal bill, we heard from every person over on that side of the aisle that was debating it that it was woefully inadequate, woefully insufficient funds and that it needed more money in order to get into a signable form. We think we have done that. We put more money in to make it into a signable form.

I would just inquire of the gentleman, is the money too much? Is the gentleman saying that we have put too

much? If so, I would certainly like to know that so that maybe we could change some of that.

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. KOLBE. My time has expired.

Mr. OBEY. So the question is rhetorical and not meant to have an answer.

Mr. FROST. Mr. Speaker, I yield 6 minutes to the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER), the ranking member on the Subcommittee on Treasury, Postal Service and General Government.

(Mr. HOYER asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, we have sad days in the House when we undermine any semblance of comity and of regular order, when we indeed undermine the premise on which so many were elected in 1994 in the so-called revolution, when they came to this House on the premise that Democrats somehow did not follow the regular order, did not follow the rules. The chairman of the Committee on Rules, the gentleman from California (Mr. DREIER), was one of the major proponents of that proposition.

This process is not fair to any Member of this House; and, more importantly, it is not fair to the American public.

My colleagues have heard the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MOAKLEY), the ranking member of the Committee on Rules, outline the scenario, the timing under which this was done. I have no criticism of either the gentleman from Florida (Mr. YOUNG) or the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. KOLBE), the chairman of our subcommittee, with whom I work very closely. They are, in my opinion, both honorable men who have acted honorably, although they have acted consistent with directions which were not consistent with good order of this House.

The ranking member has correctly stated that this bill is approximately \$7 billion, give or take a couple of \$100 million, over the budget allocation. Yet we came to subcommittee, we came to committee, and we came to this floor and were told, you cannot do this, you cannot add this \$1.2 billion. How many days ago was that, I ask my friends, that that was intoned on this floor? Approximately 7 days ago.

1330

The principle was ensconced in stone 7 days ago, and now it is gone with the wind in the dead of night, obfuscated. Why, I do not know. The Senate is not going to pass this bill. Everybody on this floor knows that.

There is no need to move this. There is no need to shut us out. I heard my friend, and I understand what he said. But the fact of the matter is the Senate had not passed the bill. We have not had a conference. I participated in no meetings.

Now, was my staff informed? Yes, they were at approximately 10:30 last

night of what was in this, and we have been scrambling ever since to find out, that is what my staff tells me, of the substance of the bill. No discussions from us as to what ought to be in and out.

Now, let me say to the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. KOLBE) and the gentleman from Florida (Mr. YOUNG), I think what they have added in this bill is appropriate for the most part. That does not mean I think they have done what we suggested be done and which they then rejected on the floor 7 days ago.

We ought to reject this rule, not only because of the substance or the lack of substance in this bill, but we ought to, as Members of this House, not Democrats and Republicans, as Members of this House, who I think in many instances respect one another. I know that is the case for most of the appropriators. I cannot speak for other committees because that is the committee that I know best, and I respect and I like the Republican members of the Committee on Appropriations, and particularly that applies to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. YOUNG) and the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. KOLBE).

But I do not respect, nor do I like the process that they have been told to carry out. This is not right. Not for this bill, not for the Legislative bill.

I participated in the conference on the Legislative bill. I sat there. We talked about the provisions. We voted at the end. I did not get everything I wanted. As a matter of fact, I agreed significantly in some parts of that bill.

But I did not raise any questions. The process was followed. You win some; you lose some. You make your arguments.

Here, that was not the case. My colleagues heard the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MOAKLEY). How can the CATS come here \$7 billion over budget? It is going to be interesting to watch them vote on this package.

Now, I do not agree with them, but if there is any intellectual consistency, I am going to be astounded that they might do that. One may get them to do that.

I do not think our Members are going to vote for this bill, not because they do not think the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. KOLBE) that what he added on is appropriate with IRS, with GSA and with other items in the bill. We discussed that. You agreed. I agreed. We do not disagree on that.

But, Mr. Speaker, we are going to be here at least for another 30 or 45 days. Let us treat one another and the American public with respect, with consideration. Yes, we will disagree; and, yes, my colleagues will impose from time to time the majority will. That is democracy.

But do not do it in the dead of night. Do not recess late at night so one can have an extra legislative day. That is a legislative game to stick it to us, because the rules that they so passionately argued for when they were in the

minority ought to protect the minority and that we overran they said, say that one cannot do it in one legislative day. So they did this gimmick. It is a legitimate gimmick. We used it. They complained bitterly about it. They did it last night in the dead of night and came here at 7 a.m. and filed it.

This rule ought to be defeated. We ought to be about the regular order and do things the right way and respect one another and respect this institution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BARRETT of Nebraska). The Chair advises the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. LINDER) has 19½ minutes remaining. The gentleman from Texas (Mr. FROST) has 8½ minutes remaining.

Mr. LINDER. Mr. Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. FROST. Mr. Speaker, I inquire of the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. LINDER) whether he has additional speakers.

Mr. LINDER. Mr. Speaker, perhaps one, perhaps two; but right now I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. FROST. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. SERRANO).

(Mr. SERRANO asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SERRANO. Mr. Speaker, I started out in life with English as a second language. So even though I speak more English in my adult life than I have spoken Spanish, I still have to pay close attention to make sure that what I hear is correct.

I heard that this decision was made through an "informal conference." I tried that in Spanish—the gentleman from New York spoke in Spanish). I tried it in English, "informal conference." Both ways I come up with no conference at all.

In other words, an informal conference is a couple of people getting together and deciding there is something they do not like in a bill and then destroying that bill, taking that out, and then presenting it to us as an insult to the will of the House.

Let us be clear. The House said that on one particular issue, the issue of our future relations with Cuba, we would begin to change our behavior. In one particular instance, with 301 votes in favor, the House spoke on that issue.

But we knew, those of us who support that issue knew, that somehow we would figure on the other side a way to kill that. We had to. How could we listen to 301 Members? How could we listen to the majority of the American people? How could we listen to the American farmer? Are you kidding?

So this bill is before us today as an attempt to accomplish many things, but in particular to get two amendments that continue to punish a country and ignore the will of the American people.

This is not the end of this issue. We will try very hard today to defeat this rule. But the fact of life is that my colleagues' time is running out. They cannot continue to ignore the Constitution. They cannot continue to ignore

the will of the people, and they cannot continue to ignore the will of their own Members.

There are 301 Members, there are Republican Members, who will have to explain to the American farmer. My colleagues are hearing it from a person from the South Bronx, who thought all food grew in supermarkets up till recently. My colleagues are going to have to explain to them why they turn their backs on the American farmers who have been begging them to support them on this issue.

Cuba did not lose today. I and those who support this issue did not lose today. The big losers are the process in this House and the American farmer.

There is no compromise on another bill. Do not kid me, and do not kid us. There will never be a compromise on another bill as long as there is a desire to continue to ignore the will of the American people.

Vote down this rule.

Mr. LINDER. Mr. Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. FROST. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MCGOVERN).

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to the rule, and I want to associate myself with the remarks of the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MOAKLEY), the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. OBEY), and the gentleman from New York (Mr. SERRANO), especially with regard to the outrageous action by the Committee on Rules to remove in the dead of night the language overwhelmingly passed by this House regarding easing the embargo and travel restrictions on Cuba. The Sanford amendment which dealt with travel restrictions passed this House by 232 to 186. The amendment by the gentleman from Kansas (Mr. MORAN) dealing with food and medicine passed this House by 301 to 116.

A handful of Members in the leadership on the other side are apparently still nostalgic for the Cold War, enough so that they have ignored the will of this body.

The so-called compromise that the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. LINDER) made reference to earlier, it is not a compromise. It is a sellout. It would add on to the restrictions that are already in place.

What the Committee on Rules did, not only shows a lack of respect for this House, but it shows a lack of respect for the Members of this House on both sides of the aisle. The Committee on Rules has turned its back on our farmers.

My colleagues talk about the need for democracy in Cuba. How about a little democracy in the House of Representatives.

Mr. LINDER. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. DELAY), the majority whip.

Mr. DELAY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me this time.

Mr. Speaker, this is a very interesting debate; and it is a good debate

to have at the closing hours before the August district work period, because it is a great warning as to what is going to happen in September.

Yes, I am sad to say that spending is up on this bill. The House did an incredible job over this year passing 12 bills, and hopefully this afternoon 13 bills, trying to hold the line on the spending.

Through all the debates, every debate on every one of those 12 bills that we have already passed, and the debate we saw yesterday on the D.C. bill, the minority, the Democrats, complain that there was not enough spending. They want to spend more money. They want to spend more money. They claimed every bill was woefully, woefully inadequate in spending.

The President has said he wants more spending. So we thought that, in fashioning this particular bill, we would honor as much of their request as we could honor in order to get their support and in order to get the President to sign the bill.

We did consult with the White House on what their needs were in the Treasury-Postal bill. We begrudgingly gave them some of the money in the TPO bill, \$1.2 billion, that they have been crying for all this year, because we know that the President of the United States has to sign the bill before it becomes law. So we did that.

But do not denigrate the work of this House. The work of this House has been strong in trying to hold the line on spending.

They are salivating over the notion that there is this huge surplus, that they could spend more money. It is harder to deal with these issues under a surplus than it was under a deficit because of the penchant of many Members wanting to spend more money.

But we have told the American people that we are going to pay down on the debt. There is a \$270 billion surplus, and we are going to spend 84 percent of that in paying down on the debt on our children and grandchildren. We ask for 8 percent, 8 percent of that surplus to give some tax relief and tax fairness in the marriage penalty repeal, repealing the death tax.

On this bill is repealing the Spanish-American War tax that they kept spending when they were in control on bigger government. We think the American family needs a little tax fairness and tax relief, 8 percent of the surplus.

We sort of set aside another 8 percent, \$22 billion, for their increased spending, knowing that we could not get the President to sign it unless we gave it to them. That is why we bring it here. Let me just quickly touch on the Cuba issue. They won the Cuba issue. I was absolutely opposed to it. But they want it in the TPO bill, which is not the proper way to do it.

But because those two amendments passed and passed overwhelmingly, they won. They have got the leverage now to go and negotiate in the con-

ference of the Committee on Agriculture appropriations bill to get what they want. That is very significant. But to do it the way that they did it is really something that the Senate just would not accept because it is not the right way to do it.

We have tried to hold the line. But let me tell my colleagues what is really going on here and why we have had to use this unusual procedure in order to get these appropriations bills.

This is the anniversary, by the way, the 1-year anniversary when the minority leader announced that their strategy is to disrupt, obstruct, and stop the Republican House from passing anything. They have been trying to carry that out all year long. We have a six-vote margin, now, thank God. We have a 7-vote margin as of yesterday. We have a 7-vote margin. On these bills, it has been very difficult to put these bills together all by ourselves because they refused to participate.

They have even asked their own Members to vote against their own districts and their own interests in these appropriations bills in order to obstruct getting things done.

They outline their strategy. They are trying to carry it out. Right now, in the other body, they cannot pass anything because the Democrats in the other body have the Senate tied in knots. The reason that we had to do TPO on this bill is they cannot get it up on the floor of the Senate because the Democrats do not want to pass it. That is why we had to put it on this bill. They have used everything available to them to obstruct our ability to carry out the appropriations process.

1345

The point I am trying to make is we have worked very, very hard to pay down the debt with the surplus, to give a little tax fairness and hold the line on spending. That is the fiscally responsible thing to do. The other side, and I point out that they argued all year there is not enough money in here, and now we see them arguing because there is too much money in this bill. It is an amazing dichotomy that we witness here all day long every day.

The point is they do not want the process to work. They do not want us to pass these bills because they want to force us into some sort of summit with a big omnibus bill so they can get more spending. Well, we ain't goin' there. We ain't goin' there. We are going to pass these bills. We are going to do the fiscally responsible thing, and I hope our Members will stand up, vote for this rule and allow us to proceed.

Mr. FROST. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. SANFORD).

Mr. LINDER. Mr. Speaker, yield 1 minute to the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. SANFORD).

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BARRETT of Nebraska). The gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. SANFORD) is recognized for 2 minutes.

Mr. SANFORD. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Texas (Mr. FROST) and the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. LINDER) for yielding me this bipartisan time.

I rise very reluctantly to oppose this rule. And the reason I do so, and my comments would be aimed at conservatives and Republicans, the reason I do so is because I think this is a gut-check vote. Because one of the things I ran on back in the beginning of the 104th Congress, before I ever got here, was the idea of working against midnight deals. One of the things we talked about, the young Members of the 104th Congress, before we ever got here, is that we have to stop this. The Democrats did it for too long. And yet here we find ourselves basically getting a \$30 billion bill at 11 a.m. and we have 2 hours to look at a \$30 billion bill. That is the antithesis of what we are to be about in process.

Secondly, my daddy always used to say, "Don't bid against yourself." This is a classic case of bidding against ourselves. Because normally we say, well, we are here, the Senate is over here in terms of spending, so therefore we are going to have to appease the Senate and we will come up with some number halfway in between. But here, without the Senate ever meeting, we have gone and increased legislative branch by \$51 million; we have increased Treasury, Postal by \$1.27 billion, and we really are bidding against ourselves.

So I think this is one of those cases where, and I respectfully mean this, as my dad used to say, "If you don't get something right, then try, try, and try again." We need to defeat this rule, send it back, and ask them simply to try again.

I would mention a couple of things that did come out in the few moments I had to look at this bill. For those against gun control, why are we increasing ATF by 29.4 percent; for those that that is an issue of importance? For those conservatives against the congressional pay raise, why are we including it here? Again, if Members want a fig leaf cover in voting against the pay raise, then wait and vote against the bill itself. But this is a chance to truly defeat it. And for those against an increase in Members' pension, here is a chance to get at it.

The fact of the matter is I have talked to our colleagues on the Senate side, and they are never going to agree to this nonconference conference. This has a lot to do ultimately with Cuba, and the question is what are we willing to trade off in terms of ideals that we believe in and money toward that end? I think this is a price too high.

Mr. FROST. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 1 minute.

The gentleman from Texas (Mr. DELAY) is leaving the floor, but I had trouble following his logic. He would not yield time to me, he is leaving the floor now, but I noticed that the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. KOLBE) was pointing in one direction; he was say-

ing that, well, the Senate couldn't take this up because there were holds on just additional nominations, presumably by Republicans; and the gentleman from Texas (Mr. DELAY) was pointing the other direction; and he was saying, no, they could not take this up because the Democrats, who are in the minority of course, were blocking consideration.

Now, which is it? Is it because Republicans have holds on judicial nominations or is it because the minority Democrats prevented this from coming up? I do not quite understand. The gentlemen cannot have it both ways, and I would ask if the gentleman from Texas (Mr. DELAY) could respond to that?

Mr. KOLBE. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. FROST. I yield to the gentleman from Arizona.

Mr. KOLBE. Since the gentleman spoke about what I said, Mr. Speaker, I said that there was some disagreement over some of the judicial nominations and, for that reason, the other party in the Senate, it is my understanding, and I know we are not supposed to characterize what was happening, but for that reason they, therefore, put a hold on all the appropriation bills. That was simply what I was saying.

Mr. FROST. Mr. Speaker, I would ask how much time we have remaining.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Texas (Mr. FROST) has 2½ minutes remaining.

Mr. FROST. Perhaps the gentleman from Georgia would like to proceed.

Mr. LINDER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Kansas (Mr. MORAN).

Mr. MORAN of Kansas. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Georgia for yielding me this time, and I rise today knowing that later this afternoon we will vote on a conference committee report that excludes the provisions of an amendment that I offered on the House floor 1 week ago today.

Seven days ago we had what I believe and know is a significant victory on behalf of American farmers, American ranchers, and, I believe, on behalf of the Cuban people. The opportunity to trade with Cuba food, medicine, and agricultural products is an important issue. The vote we had, 301 to 116, reflects a growing belief, a strong commitment in the House of Representatives that the policy that we have had in place for 38 years is a failed policy that damages American farmers and ranchers much more than it has ever damaged the government of Cuba.

I continue to seek reassurance from the leadership of the House that this issue will not go away and that ultimately our fight in this regard will be heard in this House. This issue will again arise in an appropriation bill, the legislative branch appropriation bill, and I again point out to the leadership of the House, both the Democrat and Republican leadership, that we have the ability and the support of the Mem-

bers of the House and their constituencies to advance this issue this year. I will continue to work today with the leadership of the committee, the leadership of the Committee on Rules, and the leadership of the House to make certain that this issue prevails at the end of the day.

Mr. FROST. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER).

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I want to make two points, in response, frankly, to the majority whip.

First of all, it was not the Democrats, it was all of us. Let me read from the report of our committee, the majority report, which I supported, which said "With those additional responsibilities in mind," that is the things that are in the bill, "the allocation is short by approximately \$1.3 billion."

So I tell my friend, the majority whip, that he says it in the report that this is needed. But 7 days ago the gentleman would not do it. Why would he not do it 7 days ago? So he could say to the American public what he has just said now; we are trying to constrain spending; Yes, we think \$1.3 billion is necessary; and, guess what, 7 days later we will put it in. But the press release that went out on Friday said no, we are going to have fiscal constraint. For 6 days. For 6 days.

Secondly, I would say to my friend there is no need for this, whatever is happening in the other body. We could have considered the legislative bill on its merits in order, and we could consider the Treasury, Postal bill on its merits in order.

PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, parliamentary inquiry.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman will State his inquiry.

Mr. HOYER. Am I correct that if this rule passes and we go to consideration of the conference report, and then we seek to offer a motion to recommit, that no amendment or motion to recommit which deals with the Treasury, Postal bill will be in order because it will not be germane under the conference committee report because it is on the legislative bill? Am I correct on that, Mr. Speaker?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The motion to recommit to conference will be available and may include instructions to address issues within the scope of conference such as certain reactions from the conference report.

Mr. HOYER. My question, though, Mr. Speaker is if in the motion to recommit a change in the Treasury, Postal bill is offered, will that be in order?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. That question will be addressed by the Chair when actually presented, but the Chair can say generally that a motion to strike certain matter might be in order.

Mr. HOYER. I understand a motion to strike will be in order on any part of the bill. But my point is, I believe I

have been told by the Parliamentarian, and I want to make sure that the Members know this as well, that a change in the Treasury, Postal bill will not be germane because the only germane amendment to change the bill will be to the legislative bill because that is the underlying bill. Am I correct on that?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. That question cannot be prejudged at this point in time.

Mr. HOYER. Why not? There is not an answer that exists to that, Mr. Speaker? It is not a theoretical question.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. At this point, the question is hypothetical.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, let me suggest that it may not be hypothetical at all as it relates to how Members feel they can vote on this particular rule, because they will know if they vote on this rule that they may or may not be precluded from taking such action under the rules that they may want to take.

That is why I believe that it is a relevant question at this time, prior to the vote on the rule.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. That is a fair question on which to engage in debate but not for advisory opinion from the Chair. It is still hypothetical.

Mr. FROST. Mr. Speaker, I yield the balance of my time to the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. OBEY), the ranking member on the Committee on Appropriations.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. OBEY) is recognized for 1½ minutes.

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me this time.

I would once again want to try to correct some of the misstatements made by the distinguished majority whip. He indicated that those of us on the Democratic sides of the aisle had insisted that all 13 appropriation bills have a higher spending level than those produced by the majority. I would point out I wrote dissenting views to the Department of Defense bill that the majority brought to this House. That bill is \$19 billion over last year and it is \$5.1 billion above the President's request. Not with my vote, but with his.

The Labor HHS bill, at this point, the document being worked on in conference, is \$2.5 billion over the President's request.

The point we are trying to make is very simple. The majority party indicated earlier in this year that it was going to insist on its budget resolution. We made the point at that time that it was not realistic; that the Congress would wind up spending much more money than that, and that they ought to fess up earlier rather than later. Now what has happened is that on bill after bill the majority party is throwing away the budget limitations, but we have no idea what limitations are replacing them.

In other words, we are now acting in Congress the way the Congress acted

before 1974 with the passage of the Budget Act. For all practical purposes, whatever the Committee on the Budget has proposed is considered as being irrelevant. There are no rules except the rules designed on an ad hoc basis, anonymously, by the gentleman from Texas and his other fellow leaders, and that is no way to run a railroad much less run a legislative representative body.

1400

Mr. LINDER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, a couple of days ago I was talking with a gentleman from the other side of the Capitol about the appropriation process, and he said that he was deeply involved in the Foreign Ops appropriations bill and that the Members on both sides had agreed on all the differences from the House to the Senate on Foreign Ops.

However, he could not get any Members on the minority party or the White House to meet with them. They refused to meet, including the White House. Because they have this strategy to drag it out, stretch it out, do not agree to anything, complain about everything; and then one day, as the Majority Whip said, we will be here in October with a huge appropriations bill that will take in several of these 13 appropriations bills and they will get to spend more money. We heard that throughout this process on 13 bills that we are not spending enough.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. LINDER. I yield to the gentleman from Maryland.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I understand the proposition of the gentleman. The Majority Whip made that, as well.

If that is the case, why does not the majority, which controls both Houses, send the bills as they think they ought to be to the White House and let them veto them and let the American public see what is going on?

Mr. LINDER. Mr. Speaker, reclaiming my time, we would very much like to do that. But if 41 of the Democrats on the other side of the Capitol determine to filibuster, they can stop anything from happening.

As the gentleman knows, they have to have 60 votes in that body. They are determined not to let anything move at all, not even to let them bring it up without all kinds of amendments that are not germane to the process, which, in a body that has only two rules, unanimous consent and exhaustion, they can put anything on a bill. So they are slowing it down.

The fact of the matter is that this House has voted to pass all three of these provisions before. These provisions are before us again today. We are trying to get these passed and out of these bodies so that the President can veto them, because we expect that he will. Then we will be back in September dealing with the differences.

It would be easier if they would engage us today and help us with these

differences today and move forward with the process.

So I would say to my colleagues that this rule, while cumbersome, not pretty, is a rule that gets the process moving. It is not new to us. We remember when Speaker Wright did this some years ago. But it does get the process moving.

Let us get to the debate on the bills, the substance of the bills. Let us move this process. And let us get out of town for our district work period knowing that we passed, if not all of them, all but maybe one of them, hopefully all of them, before August, something that has not been done in modern times.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time, and I move the previous question on the resolution.

The previous question was ordered.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BARRETT of Nebraska). The Chair again must remind Members to avoid improper references to the Senate, including characterizations of their actions.

The question is on the resolution.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the noes appeared to have it.

Mr. LINDER. Mr. Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a quorum is not present and make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on the resolution are postponed.

The point of no quorum is considered withdrawn.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. PEASE). Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will now put the question on those resolutions on which further proceedings were postponed earlier today.

Votes will be taken in the following order: House Resolution 564, and House Resolution 565.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 4865, SOCIAL SECURITY BENEFITS TAX RELIEF ACT OF 2000

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The pending business is the vote de novo on House Resolution 564.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the resolution.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. FROST. Mr. Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a quorum is not present and make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Evidently a quorum is not present.

The Sergeant at Arms will notify absent Members.